



# BUILDING CHARACTER

**Scripture Focus:** John 17:13–17;  
Galatians 5:16–23; 1 Peter 2:1–3

## I. The \_\_\_\_\_ in Building Character (Gal. 5:16–23)

### A. The \_\_\_\_\_ follows the \_\_\_\_\_ (Gal. 5:16–18)

Walking in the Spirit requires an ongoing practice of \_\_\_\_\_ to the Holy Spirit's control.

The Holy Spirit gives the believer \_\_\_\_\_ over the \_\_\_\_\_ so the believer might live righteously.

### B. The \_\_\_\_\_ produces \_\_\_\_\_ (Gal. 5:19–23)

#### 1. \_\_\_\_\_ of the flesh (5:19–21)

People who consistently \_\_\_\_\_ sinful behavior show that their sin natures still \_\_\_\_\_ their lives

#### 2. \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit (5:22, 23)

The Spirit's fruit \_\_\_\_\_ God's character. God's character in the believer \_\_\_\_\_ affects both the believer's relationship to God and others.

## II. The \_\_\_\_\_ for Building Character (John 17:13–17; 1 Pet. 2:1–3)

### A. \_\_\_\_\_ on God's Word (John 17:13–17; 1 Pet. 2:1, 2)

A believer prepares for God's service by \_\_\_\_\_ on God's Word and learning God's \_\_\_\_\_ found therein.

The believer walks in the Spirit because he or she has drunk the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Word.

### B. \_\_\_\_\_ by God's Word (1 Pet. 2:2, 3)

Those who feed on God's pure Word will find God graciously and generously satisfies their \_\_\_\_\_.

Satan and the world don't give our souls satisfaction and contentment; they only make our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ worse.



# Time with God

Read each passage and answer the questions to spend personal time with God.

## MONDAY

*Read Galatians 5:16–18.*

To walk in the Spirit is to make a habit of submitting to the Spirit's leading. How has the Spirit led you recently? How did you respond?

What will happen if you choose not to listen to the Holy Spirit's promptings to do right?

## THURSDAY

*Read John 17:13–16.*

Christ planned to give you joy as you followed and obeyed Him. Would you say your life is characterized by joy? Explain.

How have you shown your friends that you belong to God and are not "of this world"?

## TUESDAY

*Read Galatians 5:19–21.*

Why might you hope to gain by letting your flesh, your sin nature, control your life?

What effects do the works of the flesh have on your life?

## FRIDAY

*Read John 17:17.*

To be sanctified means to be set aside for God's use. How does God sanctify believers?

What are you doing to expose yourself to God's truth in His Word?

## WEDNESDAY

*Read Galatians 5:22, 23.*

When have you seen the Spirit work through you to produce one of the fruits Paul listed?

How does following the Spirit's lead affect your life?

## SATURDAY

*Read 1 Peter 2:1–3.*

Mark your level of desire for God's Word.



Ask God to give you a desire to know His Word and then plan to be regularly in God's Word.

# Tough Questions Answered



## Why can't I seem to say no to some sins?



Some sins are what we call besetting sins. They are sins that seem to be part of our DNA. Saying no to the sin feels impossible and victory over the sin highly unlikely. Are there sins we can't stop participating in? Are we doomed to always commit some sins?

First, you need to know that there are no temptations you face that aren't also faced by other believers. Paul said there is temptation that overtakes you that is not common to humanity (1 Corinthians 10:13). That means you aren't facing a unique temptation for which there is no way of escape.

In the same verse, Paul said God is faithful to not allow you to be tempted to the point of being helpless. He added that God will always make a way of escape so you bear it, or get victory over it.

So what is this way of escape? It starts before you even face the besetting sin. It starts with dedicating yourself to know God's Word so you might fill your mind with the truth. Every temptation your sin nature finds attractive comes laced with lies that you will accept if you aren't filled with truth from God's Word. Jesus said believers become set apart from sin and active in God's service through the truth in God's Word (John 17:17).

Getting God's truth in your mind gives the Holy Spirit a weapon to use against Satan's tricky lies and wily ways (Ephesians 6:17). Paul called the Bible the sword of the Spirit because the Holy Spirit uses it on your behalf.

Beware! Your sin nature will never reform. It will vote to sin every time you face temptation. You must trust God's faithfulness to give you victory based on His Word and by the power of His Spirit in you. If you do, you will realize that the joy your sin nature wanted through sin comes through obeying God (1 Peter 2:3).

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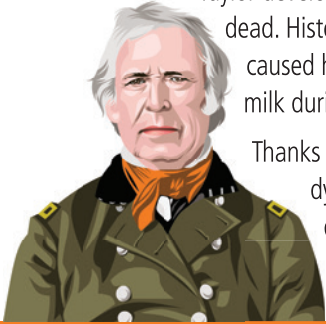
# Desire Pure Milk



Zachary Taylor, the twelfth president of the United States liked milk, but milk apparently didn't like him. On July 4, 1850, he attended festivities celebrating the planned building of the Washington Monument. The day was hot, so he cooled down by drinking iced milk and eating cherries. Later he drank a lot of water to quiet his stomach. The water didn't help.

Taylor developed severe cramping that led to dehydration. Just five days later he was dead. Historians wonder if the milk might have been contaminated with bacteria that caused him to contract cholera. No doubt Taylor wasn't asking for another glass of milk during the five days before he died.

Thanks to a modern medicine, we can enjoy a glass of milk on a hot day without dying. Peter compared pure milk to the Word of God and commanded us to desire it as much as a newborn baby desires his mother's milk. If we drink up the Word of God, the Spirit will use it to build godly character in us.



## Memory Verse Activity



### Memory Verse—Philippians 2:12, 13

We must put effort into our spiritual growth and do so with fear of (respect for) God. We are to work it out by being in God's Word and depending on the Holy Spirit for strength and wisdom to obey. We can work with confidence because the Spirit is working in our hearts to accomplish His good pleasure. God's good pleasure includes the work He wants to do through and for us.

1. What level of effort do you put into building a social media presence?
2. What level of effort do you put into building godly character?
3. How will you make God's Word a regular part of your life?

## Measuring Growth



Without depending on the Holy Spirit and feeding on God's Word, the next twelve lessons in this course won't have much of an impact on you. Godly character must be built through the ministry of the Spirit and the Word. There are no shortcuts to becoming a godly person with godly character. When you do submit to the Spirit and feed on the Word, you will find God is gracious in giving you peace, joy, and contentment. Satan and the world, by contrast, only demand more and more of your devotion. All they "give" is greater lusts for sin and ultimate regret and despair.

Look for the following indicators that you understand God's provision for building godly character.

1. I depend on the Holy Spirit for strength and wisdom in building character.
2. I spend time in God's Word to learn God's truths.
3. I recognize that Satan and the world could never give God's gracious gifts of joy, peace, and contentment.

**Additional Memory Verses**—John 17:17; Galatians 5:22, 23; 1 Peter 2:2, 3.